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EXAMINER

MORRISON, THOMAS A

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3653

DATE MAILED: 02/14/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/627,560

Applicant(s)

ANDERSEN ET AL.

Examiner

Thomas A. Morrison

Art Unit

3653

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 November 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 22-31 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

1. Claims 1-4, 6-7, 9-18 and 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,348,101 (Schonfeld et al.).

Regarding claim 1, Fig. 1 shows a media handling system for an image forming device (110) configured with a primary media path (from 72 to 84 and then from 88 past 90 and over to 96) and a duplex media path (from near 102 to 100 and then past 74 and 82 and back over to 80 for re-feeding to an imaging forming device), the media handling system comprising:

a media feeder (including 70 and 74) positioned adjacent to one side (left-hand side) of the image forming device (110) and configured to input print media into the duplex media path of the image forming device (110).

Regarding claim 2, Fig. 1 shows that the duplex media path is a substantially horizontal media path. In as much as applicant does not set any specific angular tolerance limits for the term "substantially horizontal", it is the examiner's position that the duplex path of Schonfeld et al. is substantially horizontal.

Regarding claim 3, Fig. 1 shows that the media feeder (including 70 and 74) is configured to automatically input non-imaged media into the duplex media path of the image forming device. See also Fig. 7.

Regarding claim 4, Fig. 1 shows that the media feeder (including 70 and 74) includes a high-capacity media storage unit (70) to store a quantity of media. See also Fig. 6 which shows a stack of media. Moreover, see column 5, lines 38-39 for an explanation of storing media.

Regarding claim 6, Fig. 1 shows a media output unit (including 104) configured to be positioned adjacent to the one side (left-hand side) of the image forming device (110) to receive media discharged from the image forming device (110).

Regarding claim 7, Fig. 1 shows that the media feeder (including 70 and 74) and the media output unit (104) are configured to be vertically-stacked to reduce a footprint of the image forming device (110).

Regarding claim 10, Fig. 1 shows a media handling apparatus for inputting non-imaged media into an image forming device (110) having a primary media path (from 72 to 84 and then from 88 past 90 and over to 96) along which an image is formed on a print media, the handling apparatus comprising:

a return media path (from near 102 to 100 and then past 74 and 82 and back over to 80 for re-feeding to an imaging forming device) configured to selectively receive imaged print media from the primary media path and return the imaged media to the primary media path for multiple imaging;

a media input unit (including 70) configured for attachment to one side (left-hand side) of the image forming device (110) to input non-imaged media into the return media path of the image forming device (i.e., see also Figs. 6-7); and

a media output unit (including 96) for receiving imaged media discharged from the primary media path, the media output unit (including 96) being configured for attachment to the one side (left-hand side) of the image forming device and stacked above of the media input unit (including 70).

Regarding claim 11, Fig. 1 shows that the return media path is a substantially horizontal path. In as much as applicant does not set any specific angular tolerance limits for the term "substantially horizontal", it is the examiner's position that the return media path of Schonfeld et al. is substantially horizontal.

Regarding claim 12, Fig. 1 shows that the media input unit (including 70) further comprises a media storage unit (70) to store a quantity of non-imaged media. See also Figs. 6-7.

Regarding claim 14, Fig. 1 shows that the media input unit (70) is configured to be detachably mounted to the one side (left-hand side) of the image forming device (110).

Regarding claim 15, Fig. 1 shows that the media input unit (70) and the media output unit (including 96) are integral within a common housing.

Regarding claim 16, Fig. 1 shows an image forming apparatus comprising:

a housing (near numeral 110) having at least one wall;

an image forming unit (including 12) provided within the housing for forming an image onto print media;

a media storage unit (70) configured to store a supply of non-imaged print media (i.e., see also Fig. 6 and column 5, lines 38-39);

a primary media path (from 72 to 84 and then from 88 past 90 and over to 96) for carrying print media to the image forming unit (including 12) for imaging;

a duplex media path (from near 102 to 100 and then past 74 and 82 and back over to 80 for re-feeding to an imaging forming device) configured to receive imaged print media from the primary media path and return the imaged print media to the primary media path for duplex imaging; and

the duplex media path (from near 102 to 100 and then past 74 and 82 and back over to 80 for re-feeding to an imaging forming device) being configured to receive non-imaged print media from the media storage unit (70) and to input the non-imaged print media to the primary media path for imaging.

Regarding claim 17, Fig. 1 shows a media output unit (including 104) positioned to receive imaged print media discharged from the primary media path where the media storage unit (70) and the media output unit (including 104) are stacked to reduce a footprint of the image forming apparatus.

Regarding claim 18, Fig. 1 shows a media feeder (74) to feed the non-imaged print media from the media storage unit (70) to the duplex media path.

Regarding claims 9, 13 and 20, Fig. 1 shows that the media output unit (including 104) includes a media finishing device. In particular, the media output unit (including 104) has a curved section to flip over printed media after it is printed and such flipped over media is then fed by rollers 106 into a holder 108. This ensures that the printed side of the printed media faces downward in the holder 108. See also column 10, lines 47-52.

Regarding claim 21, column 8, line 23 to column 10, line 55 discloses logic to determine whether print media is inputted into the primary media path or the duplex media path.

2. Claims 1, 2 and 4-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,365,886 (Murakami et al.). In particular, the Murakami et al. patent discloses the limitations of claims 1, 2 and 4-8.

Regarding claim 1, Figs.3-4 and the abstract disclose a media handling system for an image forming device (1) configured with a primary media path (from 21 to 25 to 17, and then back over to 34 and down to 37) and a duplex media path (from 47 over to 25 for re-feeding to an imaging forming device 12), the media handling system comprising:

a media feeder (including 38, 51 and 47) positioned adjacent to one side (right-hand side) of the image forming device (1) and configured to input print media into the

duplex media path of the image forming device (1). The media feeder (including 38, 51 and 47) inputs the lowermost sheet from a stack of sheets that are stored in the second tray 38 into the duplex path. See, e.g., column 5, lines 9-38. The sheets are stored in second tray 38 until a user pushes a second button to start the input of the sheets into the duplex path by the media feeder. See, e.g., column 5, lines 11-23.

Regarding claim 2, Figs. 3 shows that the duplex media path is a substantially horizontal media path. In as much as applicant does not set any specific angular tolerance limits for the term "substantially horizontal", it is the examiner's position that the duplex path of Murakami et al. is substantially horizontal.

Regarding claim 4, Fig. 3 shows that the media feeder (including 38, 47 and 51) includes a high-capacity media storage unit (38) to store a quantity of media.

Regarding claim 5, Fig. 3 shows that the media feeder (including 38, 47 and 51) is configured to be detachably mounted to the one side of the image forming device (1). In particular, Figs. 2-3 show how the unit 31 that contains the media feeder is detachably mounted.

Regarding claim 6, Fig. 3 shows a media output unit (including 36) configured to be positioned adjacent to the one side (right-hand side) of the image forming device (1) to receive media discharged from the image forming device (1).

Regarding claim 7, Fig. 3 shows that the media feeder (including 38, 47 and 51) and the media output unit (including 36) are configured to be vertically-stacked to reduce a footprint of the image forming device (1).

Regarding claim 8, Fig. 3 shows that the media feeder (including 38, 47 and 51) and the media output unit (including 36) are integral within a housing (31).

3. Claims 1, 3-4 and 16-19, as best understood, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,918,490 (Stemmle). In particular, the Stemmle patent discloses the limitations of claims 1-4 and 16-19.

Regarding claim 1, Fig. 1 shows a media handling system for an image forming device (10) configured with a primary media path (from 72 up to near 58 and past 82, 84 and 67) and a duplex media path (from 67 back to 94 and past 90, 102 and 76), the media handling system comprising:

a media feeder (including 70 and 76) positioned adjacent to one side (below) of the image forming device (10) and configured to input print media into the duplex media path of the image forming device (10).

Regarding claim 3, Fig. 1 shows that the media feeder (including 70 and 76) is configured to automatically input non-imaged media into the duplex media path of the image forming device (10).

Regarding claim 4, Fig. 1 shows that the media feeder (including 70 and 76) includes a high-capacity media storage unit (70) to store a quantity of media.

Regarding claim 16, Fig. 1 shows an image forming apparatus (10) comprising:

a housing (near 18) having at least one wall;

an image forming unit (20) provided within the housing (near 18) for forming an image onto print media;

a media storage unit (70) configured to store a supply of non-imaged print media;

a primary media path (from 72 up to near 58 and past 82, 84 and 67) for carrying print media to the image forming device (20) for imaging;

a duplex media path (from 67 back to 94 and past 90, 102 and 76) configured to receive imaged print media from the primary media path and return the imaged print media to the primary media path for duplex imaging; and

the duplex media path (from 67 back to 94 and past 90, 102 and 76) being configured to receive non-imaged print media from the media storage unit (70) and to input the non-imaged print media to the primary media path for imaging.

Regarding claim 17, Fig. 1 shows a media output unit (near 86) positioned to receive imaged print media discharged from the primary media path where the media storage unit (70) and the media output unit (near 86) are stacked to reduce a footprint of the image forming apparatus (10).

Regarding claim 18, Fig. 1 shows a media feeder (76) to feed the non-imaged print media from the media storage unit (70) to the duplex media path.

Regarding claim 19, Fig. 1 shows that the media storage unit (70) and the media output unit (near 86) are contained within a common housing.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed 11/23/2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

With regard to claim 1 in view of Schonfeld, it is first noted that according to the rejection the duplex path is (from near 102 to 100 and then past 74 and 82 and back over to 80 for re-feeding to an imaging forming device), while the primary media path is (from 72 to 84 and then from 88 past 90 and over to 98). This situation can be when paper is initially fed from 72. As such, it is the examiner's position that the media feeder (including 70 and 74) inputs print media to the duplex path (i.e., at 74). Also, claim 1 does not preclude the same media from being input back into the duplex path. In any event, it is also the examiner's position that clean print media stored in the media feeder (including 70 and 74) can also be input at this same location (i.e., in the duplex path).

With regard to claim 1 in view of Murakami et al, it is the examiner's position that a media feeder (including 38, 47 and 51) inputs media into the duplex media path (at 47).

With regard to claim 1 in view of Stemmler, the duplex path is from (from 67 back to 94 and **past 90, 102 and 76**), while the primary media path is (from 72 up to near 58 and past 82, 84 and 67). As such, it is the examiner's position that the media feeder (including 70 and 76) inputs media at 76, which is in the duplex path.

With regard to claims 2 and 11, in as much as applicant does not set any specific angular tolerance limits for the term "substantially horizontal", it is the examiner's position that the duplex path is substantially horizontal.

With regard to claim 3, there is clean media stored in element 70 of the media feeder (including 70 and 74) of Schonfeld. This clean media can be input into the duplex path via element 74. Similarly, there is clean media in element 70 of the media feeder (including 70 and 76) of Stemmler, which can be input into the duplex path via element 76.

With regard to claim 4 in view of Murakami, a new rejection sets forth a high-capacity media storage unit (38).

With regard to claims 6-8 in view of Murakami, a new rejection sets forth a media output unit (including 36).

With regard to claims 9 and 13, "media finishing device" is very broad. It is the examiner's position that flipping media to be face down while sending such media to a holder can be considered to be media finishing.

With regard to claims 10, 16 and 18 in view of Schonfeld, the duplex path is (from near 102 to 100 and then past 74 and 82 and back over to 80 for re-feeding to an imaging forming device), while the primary media path is (from 72 to 84 and then from 88 past 90 and over to 96). As such, it is the examiner's position that the media feeder (including 70 and 74) inputs print media to the duplex path (i.e., near 74). It is also the examiner's position that clean print media stored in the media feeder (including 70 and 74) can also be input at this same location (i.e., into the duplex path).

With regard to claim 16 in view of Stemmler, the duplex path is (from 67 back to 94 and past 90, 102 and 76), while the primary media path is (from 72 up to near 58 and past 82, 84 and 67). As such, it is the examiner's position that the media feeder (76)

76) inputs print media to the duplex path (i.e., at 76). It is also the examiner's position that clean print media stored in the media storage unit (70) can also be input at this same location (i.e., into the duplex path).

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas A. Morrison whose telephone number is (571) 272-7221. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 8am - 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kathy Matecki can be reached on (571) 272-6951. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



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